

Air Force Prime Time, a weekly news magazine for and about airmen stationed overseas, airs Thursday evenings at 8:25 p.m. Central European Time on AFN television. In this week's edition, airmen in Saudi Arabia work with the U2 spy plane, Incirlik ammo troops ensure fighter pilots carry real fire power, yearbooks join the computer age and more.

News briefs

Memorial fund

A memorial fund for Tech. Sgt. Keith Slingluff has been established at Community Bank. People can donate at either the Spangdahlem Air Base or Bitburg Annex branch.

Slingluff, 23rd Fighter Squadron, died March 31 after being struck by a vehicle while walking along a rural road.

For more information, call Master Sgt. Terry Whitworth, 23rd FS first sergeant, at 452-6800.

Clinics close

All medical outpatient clinics, including pharmacies, laboratories, radiology labs and the immunization clinic, close at 3 p.m. today for training. Non-emergency patients should call the 52nd Medical Group nurse triage line at 0800-825-1600 or the primary care manager line at 452-3444 concerning medical questions.

Road closures

The road leading toward Spangdahlem Air Base housing from Arnold Boulevard between buildings 212 and 320 is closed until Tuesday. Vehicle traffic coming from housing to the base is not affected.

Smith Avenue at the Arnold Boulevard intersection between buildings 128 and 133 closes Wednesday through April 27.

Security forces encourages people to avoid these areas by using Perimeter Road to get into the housing area.

Scholarship program

Senior Airman James Sullivan, 52nd Supply Squadron, was recently the first recipient of the Spangdahlem Air Base Top Three Association College Scholarship Program. He was awarded a \$50 scholarship to help offset educational costs.

The Top Three offers this program each of the five academic terms during the year. Applications are available in the education office, building 192. The deadline for the next term is today.

For more information, call Master Sgt. Lawrence Taylor at 452-5381.

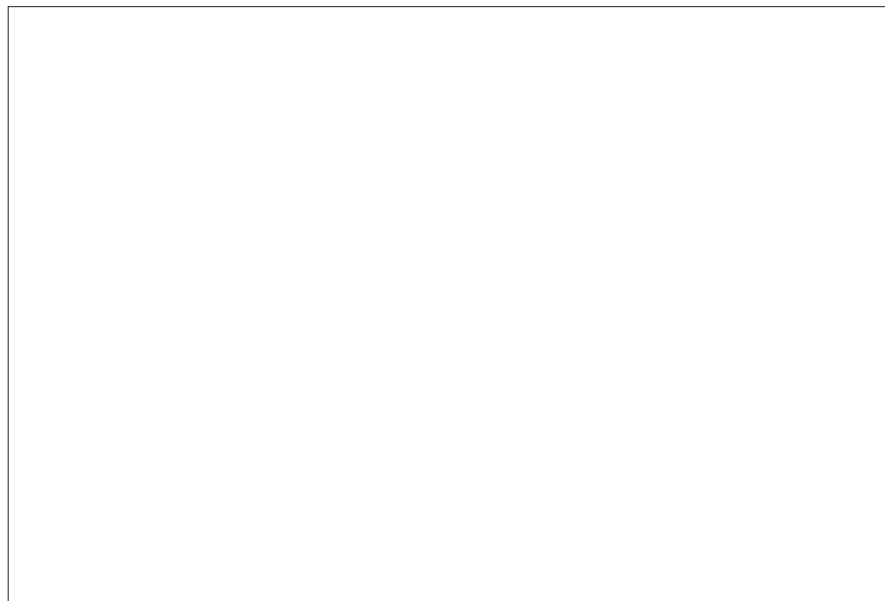
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Eifel Times

Vol. 35, Issue 14

Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany

April 20, 2001



Airman 1st Class Michelle Roquid

Giving 100 percent

Staff Sgt. Susan O'Donnell, 52nd Services Squadron, shows Christine Neaderhiser proper bicep-curl techniques at the Spangdahlem Air Base fitness center. O'Donnell recently earned a perfect score on her seven-level Career Development Course test in fitness management. "One of the reasons I did so well was because of the support and inspiration my supervisors gave me to achieve 100 percent," she said. For her achievement, O'Donnell received a wing coin presented by Brig. Gen. Don Hoffman, 52nd Fighter Wing commander, and is scheduled for an F-16 incentive flight on a future date.

GSU support center director earns annual spouse award

By Staff Sgt. Cindy Maier
52nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office

When someone tells Donna Jarvis she can't do something, she takes it as a personal challenge to prove them wrong.

After repeatedly hearing her idea for a new community activities center for the troops and families of the 52nd Munitions Support Squadron at Kleine Brogel Air Base, Belgium, was a wasted inspiration, she wouldn't give up until her idea was a reality.

That reality — the new center opened in early March — and the thousands of hours Donna volunteered didn't go

unrecognized as she was recently named the U.S. Air Forces in Europe 2001 Joan Orr Air Force Spouse of the Year.

When Jarvis, husband Master Sgt. Mark Jarvis, and daughter, Mackenzie, arrived to the small Belgian base in 1997, the family support center was an old, condemned trailer.

Jarvis, who had never volunteered before, saw a need for better support for the people at KB. So, whenever high-ranking people visited the base and asked her how life was, she told them about her idea.

See Spouse, Page 2

EQUAL for overseas returnees hits bases, update by today

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas — The latest Enlisted Quarterly Assignment Listing of available overseas returnee enlisted assignments hit military personnel flights and went online at the Air Force Personnel Center's homepage April 12.

This list includes assignments for people eligible to return from overseas in August through October.

Assignment preferences should be updated by today to ensure the information is accurate in the assignment computer system before actual assignments are made.

Assignments will be released on or about May 21, officials said.

EQUAL advertises upcoming assignment requirements by Air Force specialty code and rank, and gives people a chance to update their assignment preferences to more realistically match vacancies that will be filled in a particular cycle.

New listings are released quarterly for assignments available at overseas locations as well as assignments available for those returning from overseas areas.

Military personnel flights and commanders support staff offices have copies of the listings and can help people update their preferences.

People who are on temporary duty during the advertising period should contact the nearest personnel office for assistance. People can also access the list on the AFPC home page at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil. (Air Force Print News)

Briefs

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Airmen appreciation meal

The Mosel Dining Hall holds its monthly airmen appreciation meal 5-6 p.m. Sunday. The meal is free for meal cardholders. Because seating is limited, reservations need to be made by today. For more information or reservations, call 452-6361.

Marquee letters

Public affairs asks units with letters for the marquee to return them to the PA office in building 23 as soon as possible. Lately, a few messages couldn't be posted because of missing letters. For more information, call PA at 452-6012.

NCO Academy graduates

Tech. Sgt. Bryan Spann, Air Force News Detachment 9, earned distinguished graduate and academic achievement award honors from the Kisling NCO Academy during the April 5 graduation ceremony.

Other Spangdahlem Air Base technical sergeants graduating were: Kirk Baldwin, 52nd Communications Squadron; William Novak, 52nd Operations Support Squadron; Lyle Gillogly, 23rd Fighter Squadron; Valentino Colasito, 52nd Equipment Maintenance Squadron; Dwayne Gray, 852nd Munitions Support Squadron, Buechel Air Base, Germany; William Ealey, 52nd Security Forces Squadron; Tal Clark, 52nd Component Repair Squadron; Joe Morse, 752nd MUNSS, Volkel Air Base, the Netherlands; Jerry Farmer, 852nd MUNSS; James Heffley, 606th Air Control Squadron; James Fitting, NATO AWACS; Robert Russell, NATO AWACS, NATO AB Geilenkirchen Air Base, Germany; Ronnie Lang, NATO AWACS; Richard Lacuesta, NATO AWACS; Penny Scott, NATO AWACS; John Holley, NATO AWACS; Darryn Forrest, NATO AWACS; Steven Wyatt, Allied Forces North; Brian Weihe, Kalkar, Germany; and Michael Sigrist, 22nd Fighter Squadron.

Fund-raiser procedures

All fund-raisers held on base are required to be approved through the 52nd Services Squadron. Paperwork to obtain permission is available from the private organization monitor, located on the ground floor of building 125.

Private and "unofficial" organizations are limited to two fund-raisers per quarter.

In addition, organizations selling animal-origin foods need to call Staff Sgt. Dante Pawa, 52nd Aerospace Medicine Squadron, for specific guidelines on the approval process.

Flight moves

The 52nd Civil Engineer Squadron environmental flight recently moved to the third floor of building 127. Its new phone number is 452-7257.

Guarding the flightline

Senior Airman Camron Moffett, Air National Guardsman with the 113th Security Forces Squadron at Andrews Air Force Base, Md., initiates a challenge on the Spangdahlem Air Base flightline as Senior Airman Jeanette Phillips, 52nd Security Forces Squadron, provides backup. More than 90 ANG members from Andrews AFB and Niagara Falls, N.Y., conducted their annual two-weeks training with civil engineers, services and security forces. They arrived April 8 and depart Saturday and Sunday.

Tech. Sgt. Darrell Hudson

Accidents

By Senior Airman Kassandra Watts
52nd Security Forces Squadron
Reports and Analysis

During the past two weeks, there were six major accidents involving Americans in the Eifel region.

One of the major accidents involved an American driving a 1987 BMW traveling east on L-43 when his vehicle caught the edge of the road. The driver overcorrected, causing his vehicle to turn 180 degrees and skid 14 feet. The vehicle struck two trees, trapping him inside the vehicle. The fire department used the "jaws of life" to free him. The driver sustained multiple injuries consisting of a broken left arm, broken left leg, internal bleeding, cuts to his face and a concussion.

At the B-50 and L-46 intersection, a German and American collided when the American driver stopped his 2000 Ford Focus at the intersection. The driver looked in both directions for any traffic on B-50 then proceeded. A

vehicle traveling on B-50 collided with the American causing disabling damage to both vehicles.

Two major accidents, resulting in injuries, took place Monday. The driver of a government vehicle tried to retrieve a radio that had dropped to the left hand side floor of the vehicle. When the driver bent down to get the radio, the vehicle veered into the opposite lane and collided, head-on, with a BMW. The driver of the BMW sustained injuries from the airbag and the driver of the government vehicle sustained a mild eye injury.

Another accident that day occurred on the A-3 near Dusseldorf. A German driver cut in front of an American driver causing the American driver to brake. While the American driver avoided the collision, he did not avoid the guardrail and subsequently totaled the Honda CRX he was driving. Two passengers in the vehicle received minor injuries.

In addition, more than 40 minor accidents took place during the past two weeks:

- Six of the accidents resulted from improper backing.
- Eight were in parking lots.
- Three occurred on B-50.
- Three occurred on wet or snowy roads.
- Eleven were caused by "speeding too fast for conditions."

There were also 128 citations issued during the two-week period.

One driver recently decided to pass a vehicle traveling faster than 40 kilometers per hour on B-50. The driver passed the 52nd Support Group commander, earning the first citation for passing on B-50. The driver lost his driving privileges for seven days.

Spouse

Continued from Page 1

"When (then USAFE commander) Gen. John Jumper visited, I told him we needed the center. The original idea was a new trailer, but he said we weren't thinking big enough," Jarvis said. "Before I knew it, we had the money for the building and for everything inside."

The award, she said, was just icing on the

cake. "I heard I was put in for an award through the logistics group (the 52nd MUNSS is a geographically-separated unit of the 52nd Logistics Group), but I had no idea how far it went," Jarvis said. "Then I got an e-mail from (USAFE Commander) Gen. (Gregory) Martin congratulating me for winning at USAFE level."

Her husband said his wife's enthusiasm for the project didn't surprise him.

"Anywhere you go, you can find something that needs to be done. She found something that could help out the community."

Jarvis said now the volunteering bug has gone from her to 8-year-old Mackenzie. "She likes to think she works there as the kid's liaison. She wanted to get involved like mom."

More important to Donna than the award,

though, was seeing the project actually become reality. "Some people look at being at such a small base as a negative thing. I'm so happy the project was successful. I've been blessed to start the project and actually see it completed.

"Everyone kept telling me it couldn't be done and I just thought 'Yes it can,'" Jarvis said.

POV centers assume responsibility of cleaning vehicle undercarriage

Military members still required to clean interior, exterior before shipping cars back to states

598th U.S. Army Transportation Terminal Group

Every American military member and civilian in Europe who turns in their car knows it has to be totally cleaned before turning it in for shipment to the United States.

The important question; however, that always pops up is, "How clean?"

"The high level of rejection rates at the Military Traffic Management Command vehicle processing centers caused us a lot of concern," said Dan Sonju, 598th TRANSGP Regional Global POV Contract Program manager.

"Before we ship the vehicles, they have to pass the strict U.S. Department of Agriculture inspection. The most common reason as to why vehicles fail the initial inspection is mostly attributed to members cleaning their vehicle themselves. They aren't able to reach all contaminated areas. Needless to say, members become very upset when their vehicles get dirty and are rejected after they have paid a substantial amount of money to have them cleaned."

High pressure and intensive cleaning; however, is required to remove encrusted dirt, soil, mud, insects and

more from the undercarriage, wheel wells behind front and rear bumpers, axles, frame rails and transmissions. The cost to members often exceeds \$100. To avoid these charges, many people try to clean their vehicles themselves, said Bill Antonelli, AAL's vice president.

In coordination with MTMC, the AAL came up with new procedures to meet the stringent USDA requirements for moving POVs from Europe to the U.S.

It's the member's responsibility to clean the POV and turn it in with a clean interior and exterior. This includes cleaning the trunk and under the hood. All members are required to provide a clean POV for the joint inspection at the VPC. The exterior must be clean and the interior and trunk must be vacuumed. All trash, personal effects and other non-allowable items must be removed.

It's AAL's intention to eliminate the frustrations and difficulties members have in meeting the USDA requirements. The vehicles from the German, Benelux and Northern Italy VPC's will be consolidated in Bremerhaven port, checked and, if necessary, the undercarriage will be cleaned by AAL contractors, Antonelli said.

"AAL accepts the accountability to ensure all vehicles pass the USDA inspection at no cost to the U.S. Government; however, I would like to underline the responsibility of each member to present a clean POV," said Col. John V. Brown, MTMC 598th U.S. Army Transportation Terminal Group commander.

"These new procedures save headaches and money, waste less time, result in fewer confused members and the number of USDA inspectors at the local VPC level can be reduced," Brown said.

After the clean vehicle has been inspected and accepted at the VPC, the POV is forwarded to Bremerhaven, Germany, where AAL contractors will clean the undercarriage.

Delcio Rivera, European Command's agriculture adviser, approved the operation in Bremerhaven after he visited and reviewed the site.

"Since the outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease, AAL personnel also disinfects all vehicles from any VPC within the European Command before they are driven onboard the ship," he added.

MTMC 598th TRANSGP imports 17,000 and exports 18,000 POVs annually. To better support military members, civilians and their families, MTMC operates 28 full-service, partial-service and quality-of-life VPC's in Belgium, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and Turkey, Sonju said.

(Editor's Note: Since April 2, American Auto Logistics, Inc., performs the undercarriage cleaning process at the Port of Bremerhaven, Germany, for privately-owned vehicles originating in Germany, Benelux and Northern Italy vehicle processing centers.)

Service releases latest selective bonus listing

WASHINGTON — The Air Force has released its latest selective re-enlistment bonus list and has decided to keep bonuses at their current levels, with the exception of those in three career fields.

After careful consideration, the decision to keep bonuses at their current levels was made, Air Force personnel officials said.

For the past several months, personnel officials have worked to optimize the SRB program within available funding.

While there are no increases in bonuses for this latest release, the Air Force has increased the SRB budget from \$25 million in fiscal 1997 to \$165 million in fiscal 2001, said Lt. Col. Francine Blackmon, chief of Air Force skills management. Additionally, the number of Air Force skills eligible for an SRB has more than tripled since fiscal 1997.

Zone A bonuses in the radio communications systems, 3C1X1, career field was reduced from 2.0 to 1.0. The Zone A bonus for the communications cable

systems, 2E6X2, and the Zone C bonus for the visual information, 3U0X1, career fields have been discontinued.

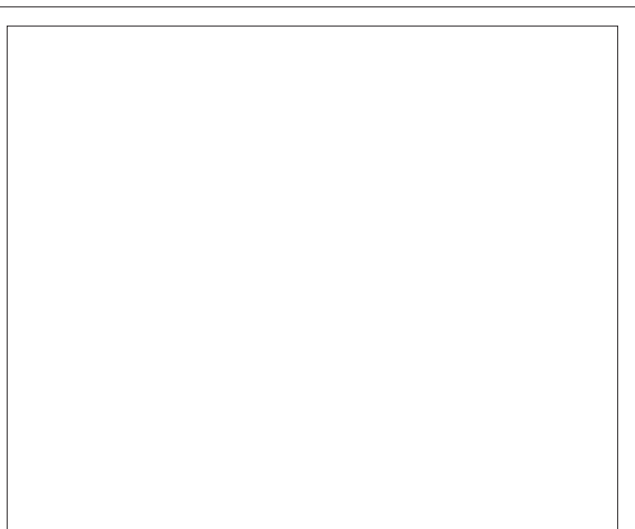
The SRB changes for the three Air Force Specialty Codes take effect May 1.

Personnel officials are scheduled to conduct the next semiannual SRB review in October.

During this comprehensive evaluation, all enlisted specialties are reviewed. The criteria for determining which enlisted skills receive an SRB include current and projected manning levels, re-enlistment trends, career field force structure changes, and inputs from individual career field managers.

For more information or to determine eligibility for an SRB, people can contact the local military personnel flight re-enlistment offices.

A complete list of the SRB program is located at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil. (Air Force Print News)



Airman 1st Class Michelle Roquid

Maintaining the mission

Crew chiefs Senior Airman Chad Jansen and Airman 1st Class John Fies, 23rd Fighter Squadron, install a rudder servo actuator on an F-16. Crew chiefs play a large role in keeping Spangdahlem Air Base's aircraft mission capable.

Company voluntarily recalls sliced ham, meat bologna

By Gerri Young
DeCA, European Region, public affairs officer

The Bar-S Foods Company is voluntarily recalling approximately 14.5 million pounds of ready-to-eat meat and poultry products produced at its Clinton, Okla., plant because the products may be contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes*.

Defense Commissary Agency Europe commissaries carry only two of the affected products. The recall includes Bar-S X-Lean Sliced Ham 16 oz package, UPC 01590000073 and Bar-S Meat Bologna 16 oz package, UPC 01590000042.

Because of the potential for food borne

illness, consumers are urged to check their refrigerators and freezers to see if they have purchased any of the affected products, and should return them to their local commissary for a full refund. The affected products should not be consumed.

European commissaries also carry Bar-S

Jumbo Meat Frank, UPC 01590000211, but this item is not part of the recall since it is produced at another plant.

Consumption of food contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes* can cause listeriosis, an uncommon but potentially fatal disease. Healthy people rarely contract this illness.

Airmen balance challenges with prospects at GSU

Senior Airman John Tompkins, security forces flight, monitors aircraft structure alarms in the local monitoring facility.

By Staff Sgt. Cindy Maier
52nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office

There are only about 135 people assigned to the 52nd Munitions Support Squadron at Kleine Brogel Air Base, Belgium, and just about as many challenges to living there.

But to those Air Force people and their nearly 300 family members, some of the challenges are beneficial - at least in some ways.

Nestled in a country setting about 60 miles from Brussels, the Kleine Brogel community offers a cultural living environment like few other Air Force assignments. In addition, the 52nd MUNSS

mission provides professional opportunities rarely matched at most main operating bases, according to Lt. Col. John Mabes, commander.

The unit, similar to a mini-wing with Air Force people representing nearly every office found at main operating bases, shares in the NATO strike mission of their host -- Belgian air force 10th Wing. It's a geographically separated unit belonging to the 52nd Logistics Group.

Essentially, long ago the United States agreed to supply munitions at Kleine Brogel if necessary. The 52nd MUNSS maintains the capability to store munitions, and when necessary, would act as technical advisers to

the Belgians on use of those munitions.

"Our mission of maintaining the capability to store munitions is the only reason we're here," Mabes said. "There's no other (U.S.) Air Force activity going on in this area."

To keep up that mission, not only do the people assigned there perform their duties in their primary Air Force specialties, everyone ends up carrying out the duties of career fields sometimes not at all related to their expertise.

Nearly everyone except for the medical technicians and the first sergeants are tasked as custody agent augmentees, which basically supplement the security forces when needed.

Four-year KB veteran Staff Sgt. Christine Herrera, NCOIC of supply and transportation, said performing a multitude of jobs is now second nature to her. She is one of two supply members on base. Additionally, she is the unit historian, public affairs liaison and anything else she might be needed to handle.

"If I was at a main operating base, I'd be focusing on one area of supply. Here, I take care of every aspect and then some. Plus, I can, and do, get called to be a CAA at the drop of a hat," said Herrera, who leaves in less than a month to go to Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D. "It's definitely been beneficial. I think the challenges here have made me a more well-rounded NCO."

Not only does working in such a small environment help make the people more versatile, but living so closely among their European neighbors provides a unique experience as well.

Tech. Sgt. Christopher W. Frey, NCOIC of law enforcement as well as a myriad of other duties, loves living in Europe. "The location is great. You can get to so many countries in little time. In just a couple of hours of driving, people are speaking a different language."

But for Frey and the other KB residents, the great part about being assigned here can also be a hindrance. Living more than two hours away from the support base, including a base exchange and commissary, proves challenging in a lot of ways.

Another challenge for some families, according to Mabes, is the loss of secondary income. With only a handful of paid positions on KB, most spouses aren't able to find work.

"Although we get a decent cost of living allowance, the economic impact of losing that second income source is huge," Mabes said. "So, yeah, you're stationed in a great place with a great opportunity to travel, only you can't afford it."

Mabes said the economic crisis for some families sometimes leads to hard decisions, such as choosing the early return of dependents option.

"Even though it's difficult, I usually approve those requests. If the family has decided the only way they can survive is for the spouse to go back home and get a job, I can't say no," Mabes said. "However, I do counsel those individuals that once they take this option, their family can't return command sponsored."

A shortage of money is just one of the things boggling families at KB. For children in the seventh through 12th grades, going to school is more than an all-day affair. They travel all the way to Allied Forces North, an hour and a half bus ride each way.

Senior Master Sgt. Vernard Dicker, 52nd MUNSS first sergeant, said some children get home later than 7 p.m. After tackling homework, it's time for bed, only to start again the next day.

Mabes said the long days limit the socializing during the week, but an active teen center keeps the youth busy on the weekends.

Despite the challenges those assigned to the 52nd MUNSS face daily, most people agree it's one of their most rewarding assignments. Even though they are a great distance away from their support base, the people at KB aren't out of touch with the Air Force. They continually prove that being at a small base doesn't hinder their performance by winning honors such as the 2000 Air Force Senior NCO Command Post Controller of the Year, 2001 Joan Orr Air Force Spouse Award for USAFE and the 2000 Lt. Gen. Leo Marquez Munitions Maintenance Field Grade Officer of the Year for USAFE.

"I feel like being stationed here won this award for me," said Senior Master Sgt. Jeffrey E. Branch, command post superintendent and winner of the Air Force Senior NCO Command Post Controller of the Year Award. "I have a lot of opportunities I wouldn't have had at a main operating base, and that makes it all worth it."

CCAF increases affiliated schools; turns 29

By Lynis Cox
Air University Public Affairs Office

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala. — The Community College of the Air Force turns 29 this year, and as the world's largest community college, CCAF is fulfilling its mission to develop the academic potential of Air Force enlisted members.

"We are definitely not '29 and holding,'" said Dr. Elane Seebo, dean of academic affairs. "The Community College of the Air Force is committed to growth, to meeting the educational needs of the enlisted force."

Policy Council members recently voted to recommend an increase in the number of affiliated member schools from 122 to 135. Increasing the number of affiliated schools means students can receive credit for more courses applicable to CCAF degrees.

Recently, CCAF brought base education services offices online with a system that allows career advisers access to service members' educational records.

The system has reported more than 50,000 hits since it became fully operational Jan. 31. Future plans include expanding the system so students can use the Internet to check their progress toward earning a degree.

The college plays a vital role in fulfilling the Air Force's education commitment to its military members, said Col. Jim McBride, CCAF commander and president.

"We have awarded more than 209,000 associate degrees since we opened in 1972, and we are looking at ways every day to give enlisted personnel more opportunity to achieve associate degrees early in their careers," he said. "Education builds a strong foundation for the future of our Air Force's

aerospace mission.

"The rapid change in communications and warfighting technology has accelerated demand for critical thinking, teamwork and commitment on the part of Air Force personnel," McBride said. "CCAF provides airmen with the means to meet these demands and achieve their personal goals."

Areas being explored through CCAF include offering enlisted Air Force members an opportunity to earn additional academic degrees or professional credentials, such as certificates or licenses in specific fields.

Most recently, CCAF has been granted authority by the Federal Aviation Administration to verify that Air Force individuals meet all requirements and to issue the certificate of eligibility to take the exam for an airframe and power plant certificate.

Delivery begins for new PFE

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas — Air Force Personnel Center officials recently announced delivery of the new Promotion Fitness Examination Study Guide (Volume 1) and the new U.S. Air Force Supervisory

Examination Study Guide (Volume 2) is expected to begin in April.

The study guides have been revised to reflect the most current information on Air Force programs, and a summary of changes is included with each volume.

First shipments will be sent to overseas locations. Both publications have a July 1 effective date and are the required study references for promotion cycle 01E9, as well as testing cycles 02E8, 02E6/7 and 02E5.

With the elimination of base publication distribution offices, base and unit Weighted Airman Promotion System monitors are responsible for ensuring study guides are provided to all enlisted members with an emphasis on those who are promotion-eligible.

The Air Force recently revised the WAPS testing schedule to reduce the waiting time between enlisted promotion testing and the promotion release dates.

The following are the revised testing dates and cycles the dates effect:

■For chief master sergeant, testing will take place the first four days after Labor Day starting with cycle 01E9;

■For senior master sergeant, testing will be permanently moved from November to January starting with cycle 02E8 with tests given Jan. 10 through 24;

■For master and technical sergeant, the testing window will slip 15 days to Feb. 15 through March 31 starting with cycle 02E7/02E6; and

■For staff sergeant, the testing cycle will slip one month, and senior airmen will test in May starting with cycle 02E5.

Another big change is the increase in time an airman has access to the proper testing materials. Currently, the Air Force requires individuals have access to study materials for only 30 days to be required to test. The new change requires that 30-day window be extended to 60 days. When

there are delays in the receipt of materials through no fault of the members, they will not be required to test until they have been granted 60 days to study.

Because of the requirement, WAPS monitors will first issue study guides to people eligible for promotion in the E-9 September 2001 test cycle.

Master sergeants testing in cycle 02E8 are second priority, staff and technical sergeants testing in cycles 02E6/7 are third priority, and the remaining enlisted population is fourth.

Each member receiving a study guide will sign for it, and those requiring replacement material because of loss or damaged will contact the unit WAPS monitor to get new study guides.

For more information about obtaining a copy of the study guides, contact your unit WAPS monitor. (Air Force Print News courtesy Air Education and Training Command News Service)

Not so elementary

Kim Sanders helps a student in her third-grade class at Spangdahlem Elementary School. Sanders was recently selected by the European Congress of American Parents, Teachers and Students as its Teacher of the Year. She represents the ECAPTS at the National PTA competition next month.

Courtesy photo

AF offers G.I. Bill to VEAP contributors

By Chuck Dittell
Education services flight

Veterans Education Assistance Program participants with even a zero balance in their account, but never closed the account, are now eligible to convert to the Montgomery G.I. Bill.

Within the next couple of weeks, eligible Eifel members will be notified by mail of this opportunity.

One hook to the conversion is members can't receive VEAP benefits after converting to the MGIB and can't receive the MGIB until they have paid \$2,700 to their VEAP account. Therefore, members should carefully time their election and payment of the initial \$2,700 VEAP fee to avoid a lapse in benefits.

VEAP program benefits include a two-for-one return rate. Members may contribute up to the maximum of \$2,700 and receive a maximum total educational assistance of \$8,100. The most a member will receive is \$300 per month for full-time enrollment or \$150 per month for half-time enrollment.

G.I. Bill program benefits include a return rate up to \$23,400 for a \$2,700 VEAP contribution. People converting from VEAP can only draw their benefits after paying the required \$2,700. The MGIB offers a college full-time benefit rate of \$650 for 36 months worth of entitlements totaling \$23,400.

VEAP participants, whether they have contributions in their accounts or not, can become eligible for MGIB if they:

■Appear on the list of eligible participants.

■Are a VEAP participant, including members who initiated a VEAP account anytime between Jan 1, 1977 and March 31, 1987.

■Deposited at least \$25 in a VEAP account or began a designated VEAP allotment. The participant may or may not now have money in the account.

■Were on continuous active duty from at least Oct. 9, 1996, through April 1, 2000, or if separated from active-duty service after April 1, 2000, received an honorable discharge or separation.

■Before Nov. 1, 2001, make an irrevocable election to enroll in the MGIB program.

Members may make either monthly payments or a lump sum payment of \$2,700. Monthly payments must be made by reducing their basic pay before their discharge from service. If \$2,700 isn't collected before discharge from pay reductions, veterans must make payments to the military service in the amount needed to bring the total to \$2,700.

The additional amount can also be collected by the Defense Department by reducing retired or retainer pay. This payment, unlike earlier contributions to VEAP, isn't refundable. The payment doesn't go into the VEAP account. It's deposited into the U.S. Treasury as miscellaneous receipts. VEAP participants must make this election by Oct. 31.

Military members should consider their basic monthly rate under the MGIB is \$650 for 36 months of full-time training. Under VEAP, it's a maximum of \$300 per month for 27 months of full-time schooling or \$225 per month for 36 months of full-time schooling.

The MGIB requires a nonrefundable \$2,700 pay reduction. On the other hand, VEAP allows members to contribute any amount up to \$2,700 pay reduction. Members who elect to stay in the VEAP

program may use any unused portion of their VEAP contribution, which is fully refundable.

The MGIB provides annual cost of living increases as well. VEAP doesn't.

Members planning to go to school full time for more than 36 months may be able to maximize their total benefits by using VEAP now and electing to switch to the MGIB closer to the conversion deadline date, Oct. 31.

In certain situations, though, VEAP pays more than the MGIB. Members shouldn't elect the MGIB in the following situations:

■They have received or believe they will receive less than an honorable discharge.

■They don't plan to go to school full time for at least six months under the MGIB. Six months is the break-even point for comparing MGIB with VEAP.

■They plan to pursue only correspondence courses. VEAP reimburses 100 percent of the cost of correspondence courses, whereas the MGIB reimburses only 55 percent of the cost.

■They plan to use their VA benefits extensively while on active duty for low cost courses, or if discharged, for less than half time for low cost courses.

■They don't have a high school diploma or equivalent and won't get one before applying for MGIB benefits. A high-school diploma or equivalent is requirement to receive the MGIB.

To process a VEAP conversion action, visit the base education center 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday in Spangdahlem Air Base building 192.

Middle school team puts their minds to use

Students take first in Odyssey competition, head to 2001 world finals

Compiled from staff reports

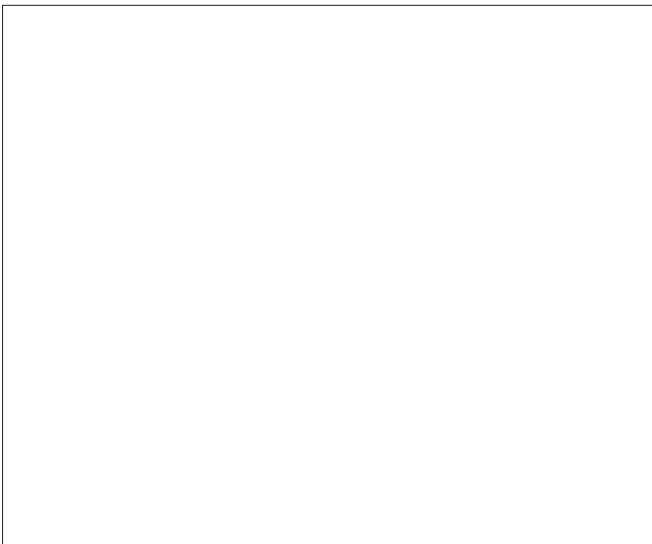
Spangdahlem Middle School's Odyssey of the Mind team took top honors in its division and category at the first-ever Department of Defense Dependent Schools-Europe OM competition March 31 at Ramstein Air Base.

By doing so, the Division II team qualified to compete at the 2001 Odyssey of the Mind World Finals June 2-5 at the University of Maryland, College Park, Md. The SMS team members are Aaron Bitler, Travis Hardin, Tabatha Clark, Maggie Harvin, Jose Tovar, Ryan Vandernack and Ashely Weston.

In the past, DODDS schools throughout Europe competed against their host nation OM organization. This year was the first time competing as its own "state," according to Elsa Tovar, Spangdahlem Elementary School kindergarten teacher and coach of the SMS team.

Teams worldwide compete at regional, state, province or country level. Those who advance are eligible for the world finals, typically held at a university campus somewhere in the United States. Past participants include teams from Australia, the Benelux, Canada, China, Germany, Hong Kong, Hungary, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Russia, Siberia, Singapore, Slovakia, the United Kingdom, West Africa and virtually every state in the U.S.

About 150 middle and high school students from 10 European DODDS schools completed in one of five general categories - mechanical/vehicle, technical performance, classics, structure and performance.



David Josar/courtesy Stars and Stripes

Travis Hardin, an eighth-grader from Spangdahlem Middle School, takes a break after presenting a skit during the Achilles' Heel segment of the Odyssey of the Mind competition.

The SMS team competed in Achilles' Heel, where teams build and test a structure made of balsa wood and glue with a vulnerable spot. The structure is tested by balancing and supporting as much weight as possible while being hit by a team created, free-wheeling vehicle at its "Achilles' Heel." The vehicle must hit the heel part of the structure in intervals determined by the weight supported by the structure. The structure must stand between 8-inches by 8-inches and weigh no more than 15 grams, except at the finals, where it may weigh no more than 18 grams, according to the official Odyssey of the Mind Web site at

www.odysseyofthemind.com.

Spangdahlem's team also earned the Renatra Fusca award, presented to teams that demonstrate an outstanding level of creativity in an OM creative problem-solving competition, Tovar said.

In addition to SMS qualifying, the NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen school (a geographically-separated unit of the 52nd Fighter Wing) also made the world finals in Division I also in the Achilles' Heel event.

Since 1978, the OM program has been providing creative problem-solving

opportunities for students of all ages, according to its Web site. Founded by Dr. Sam Micklus, a professor at Rowan University in New Jersey, the program helps teachers generate excitement in their students. By tapping into creativity, and through encouraging imaginative paths to problem solving, students learn life-long skills such as how to think, critically, overcome obstacles and rise to meet any challenge. Because their solutions to the problems are based on creativity, rather than rote learning, students learn to think divergently and are encouraged to express themselves without fear of criticism. They work in teams to create solutions, each member drawing on individual strengths to infuse their solutions with artistry, humor and technological skill - whatever it takes.

Each year, five new competitive problems are presented for teams to solve. These long-term problems are solved during weeks and months. Some are more technical, while others are artistic or performance based. Each long-term problem rewards "style" in the solution.

Competing teams are scored in three areas - the long-term problem, where they prepare solutions and bring them to competition; style, or the enhancement of the long-term problem solution; and the spontaneous problem, given to the team on the day of competition. The long-term solution is worth a maximum of 200 points, style is worth a maximum of 50 points and spontaneous is worth a maximum of 100 points. All seven members take part in the presentation of the long-term problem solution. The team designates five of the seven to solve the spontaneous problem within a specified time limit.

At a cost of about \$10,000 for the trip to the finals, the SMS team plans to hold fund-raisers during the next few months. Look for information on these events in future issues of the Eifel Times.

Attitude plays big part in helping with algebra

By Maryellen Pienta
DODDS-Europe AVID Program Coordinator

Families can do a lot to make algebra, and math in general, a better experience for their children.

For one, watching their attitude. If parents had a hard time in math, or if they currently wrestle with it, it's OK to acknowledge that to children. But don't dump on math. Emphasize instead its importance and value. Positive messages lead to more positive results in children. Made math a priority.

Check the Web. Get on the Web and start searching. The word "algebra" alone leads people to all types of sites dedicated to the subject. Many are helpful. There are sites with weekly problems for students to solve and sites where kind and helpful "Dr. Math" figures answer questions online.

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics has a rich array of such resources, and a list of recommended standards for schools. The site is at www.nctm.org.

Another helpful site is www.algebra-online.com. Algebra Online is a free service designed to allow students, parents and educators throughout the world to communicate. This includes free private tutoring, live chat and a message board, among other features.



Airman 1st Class Michelle Roquid

Making faces

Junior ROTC cadets David Valencia and Niki Biddle look at masks on display recently in the Spangdahlem Air Base fitness center. The exhibit was part of the fourth annual arts festival.

Month focuses on kids

By 2nd Lt. Diane Weed
305th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs

MCGUIRE AIR FORCE BASE, N.J. — April is the Month of Military Child, celebrated in conjunction with National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

There are about 1 million confirmed cases of child abuse in the United States out of more than 3 million reported cases to child protective service agencies, according to Prevent Child Abuse America, one of the nation's leading child abuse prevention organizations.

"Child Abuse Prevention Month is a time to focus on the protection and care of our most vulnerable and trusting family members," said Richard Parry, family advocacy outreach manager at Fort Dix, N.J., family support center.

Parry provided the following tips for improving parenting skills:

- Be a nurturing parent. Children need to know that they are special and loved. Educate yourself about a child's development process so you can have reasonable expectations about

what your child can and can't do.

- Help yourself. When the problems of everyday life pile up to the point where you feel overwhelmed and out of control, take time out. Don't take it out on your child. Take a deep breath, turn on some music and know where to get help.

- Learn what to do if your baby won't stop crying. Although it can be frustrating to hear your baby cry, especially when nothing you do seems to work, never shake a baby.

- Monitor your child's television and computer use. Watching violent films on TV or playing violent computer games can harm young children. These films and games not only scare them, but they also teach them aggression is a good way to handle frustration and solve problems. Instead, spend time actively playing with your child or read to them.

- Report suspected abuse or neglect. Keeping children safe is the responsibility of every adult in our community.

For more information, call family advocacy at 452-3129. (Air Force Print News)

Showing the ropes

1st Lt. Brandon Roth, 23rd Fighter Squadron pilot, shows Spangdahlem Elementary School second-grader Bryce Kent the instruments on an F-16 aircraft simulator. Students from the school were treated to a tour of squadron facilities, a hardened aircraft shelter, aircraft and the air traffic control tower March 30.

Senior Airman Esperanza Berrios

FMD scare

Customs tightens inspections to prevent further spread

By Robert Szostek
U.S. European Command Customs Public Affairs Office

MANNHEIM, Germany — The seemingly unstoppable spread of Foot and Mouth Disease in the United Kingdom suggests the infestation is still expanding and may reach farther within Europe and even to the United States.

U.S. members in Europe must therefore remain alert to the risks this highly contagious disease poses to the United States and the countries they live in. Military customs inspectors will increase the degree of inspections performed on personal property and military cargo. U.S. members must do all they can to assist in preventing the spread of FMD.

"For personal property, 'high-risk' shipments will be thoroughly inspected, specially for items such as garden tools, bicycles and other outside items exposed to the ground," said Delcio Rivera, U.S. Department of Agriculture adviser to the U.S. European Command.

He added people shipping outdoor items must ensure they are free of soil. Disinfecting the items with household disinfectant or a solution of bleach is more critical for areas with identified cases of FMD, as in the UK, but is also recommended as a preventive measure for other areas. Private vehicles shipped to the United States from the UK are already being disinfected. He said the wheels of vehicles shipped from the rest of Europe might be sprayed soon. He explained car shippers must ensure the inside areas of their vehicles are free of dirt and food remnants.

All animal products such as fresh meats, processed and canned meats, animal parts, hair, milk, yogurt and others are now prohibited entry into the United States from the whole of Europe. Commercially produced butter and hard cheese that contains no meat bits inside are not restricted at this time.

"USDA has stepped up its inspections of mail from Europe and will impose fines of up to \$1,000 on those who deliberately try to mail these banned items to the states," Rivera warned.

He added the fines also apply to travelers arriving stateside who are found to have these products in their baggage. The USDA can also initiate civil actions that can lead to fines of \$5,000 and a year in jail.

"As far as shipping pets is concerned, my advise is to

keep dogs and cats away from possible contaminated areas, specially before shipment when they have been given the pre-10-day examination by a vet," he continued.

Dogs and cats may transmit the FMD virus in their saliva although the virus will not affect them or show any kind of symptoms, he explained. Their cages and bedding should be thoroughly cleaned before shipment and straw, hay or other natural components should be removed. Pet owners should also clean off any dirt and soil from a pet's paws or fur before shipment and, as an additional precaution, bathe the pet upon arrival at its destination. Pet birds are of no concern in regards to FMD and other animals should follow the requirements of the Interior Department's Fish and Wildlife Service. Pets should be kept separate from all livestock for at least five days after arrival in the United States.

"Military cargo should be thoroughly cleaned, as is regular practice," said Michael L. Burkert, director of the U.S. European Command's Customs Executive Agency. High-risk items include pallets, tents, wooden crates, footwear, clothing and other military goods used on open farmland or close to farm animals. He added such items would be disinfected if proceeding from FMD contaminated or high-risk areas. This applies to all military cargo coming out of the UK regardless of the destination and also to any cargo shipped into the United States from Istres, France.

FMD is a highly virulent animal disease. It is caused by a virus that affects cloven-hoofed animals, such as cattle, sheep, goats and pigs. It also affects some wild animals, such as deer, hedgehogs and wild hogs. Horses, dogs and cats are not affected by the virus, but may act as carriers. Affected animals rapidly transmit the infection to the rest of the herd. The virus can be easily transmitted by farm equipment, footwear, clothing, and vehicles moving through infected farmland and may even be blown up to 25 miles by the wind. To cope with the outbreak, extreme measures must be taken to include barriers to contaminated areas and the destruction and burning of affected farm animals.

More information on FMD is available from the USDA at www.usda.gov/special/fmd/fmd.html.

DeCA 5 percent surcharge increases little since 1952

By Gerri Young
Defense Commissary Agency Public Affairs

Shoppers often ask why they have to pay the 5 percent surcharge, what exactly is it and what is it used for.

To clear any confusion, here are the basic facts about the DeCA surcharge:

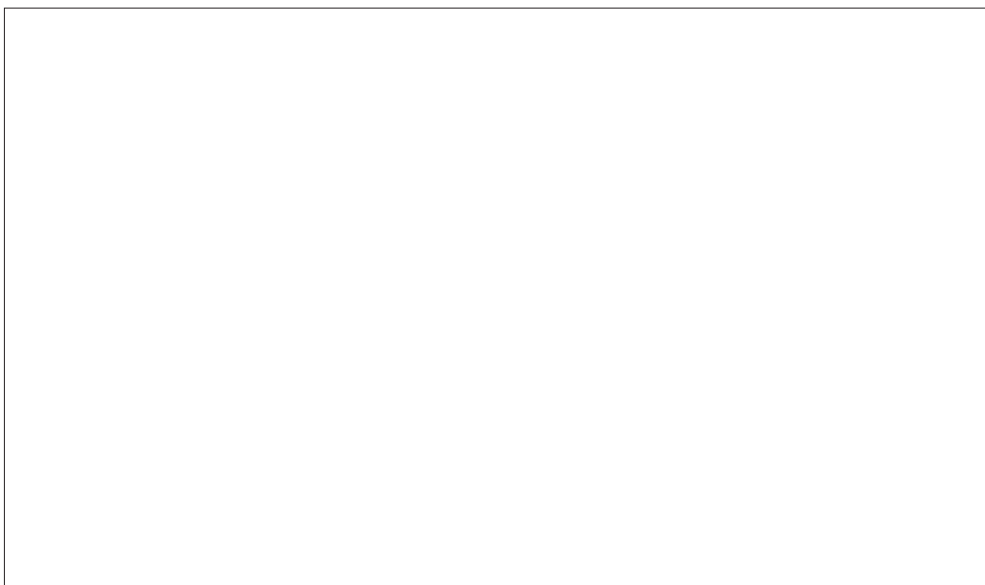
- Surcharge history can be traced back to 1879, but the first real surcharge was two percent in 1952. In 1974, Congress declared that, in order to fund construction and improvements to commissaries, a three percent surcharge would be placed on every transaction. In 1976, it was raised to four percent and in 1983, to five percent where it remains today

- The surcharge money isn't a tax and goes into a special fund primarily used for renovation of old stores and construction of new stores.

- The surcharge fund also pays for buying supplies such as paper and plastic bags, meat wrapping, register tapes, and all store equipment and maintenance.

The positive effect of the surcharge can best be expressed in simple terms. While it provides funds to build, alter and maintain commissaries, it also enables this construction to be carried out at no additional cost in tax dollars. This most visible effect of surcharge dollars in the European Region since 1997 has been the building of six brand new stores and the installation of a modern checkout system in every one of the 62 European commissaries.

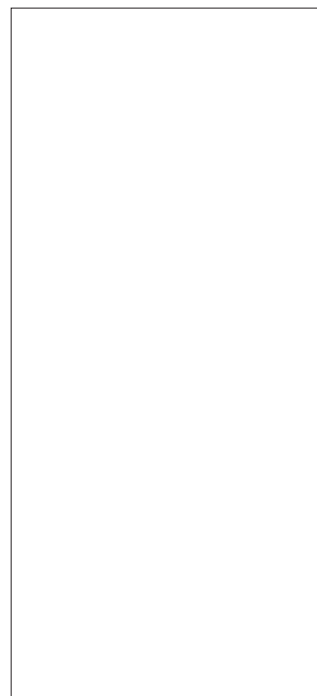
"The surcharge is clearly marked on each register tape," said Robert Tate, DeCA Europe Director. "No matter where you shop or how many times you move throughout Europe, your dollars spent on surcharge come back to the customer in the form of well run, modern facilities. It's all part of our goal of satisfying our customers."



Photos by Senior Airman Kimberlie Drews

Jubilant children

Above, hundreds of children of all ages await the start of the annual Easter egg hunt as part of Kids' Jubilee festivities April 7 at the Bitburg Middle School. Right, Megan Heitman, daughter of Maj. Kathleen Heitman, 52nd Medical Operations Squadron, tries to knock down milk cans. The event was part of Month of the Military Child activities.



Community Mailbox

Willi Geck hours

New Sunday operating hours for Willi Geck on Spangdahlem Air Base are noon to 4 p.m. For more information, call 452-7929.

School news

During April, students, parents and teachers will be asked to respond to questions about the Department of Defense Dependent Schools. Survey results allow schools, districts and areas to make improvements in the education services provided to DODDS students. The surveys are brief and should take less than 20 minutes to complete, and are administered via the Intranet. For more information, go to www.brus-dso.odododea.edu.

Pinewood Derby

Volunteer judges are needed for the annual Boy Scouts Pinewood Derby Saturday. Judges officiate the race and handle cars between runs. To volunteer, call Tech. Sgt. Brian Livingston at 452-3480.

BASH meeting

Private organizations planning on taking part in the 2001 BASH are asked to attend an organizational meeting at 10 a.m. Tuesday in the Spangdahlem Air Base fitness center. For more information, call George Price at 452-6073.

Scouting day camp

A staff meeting concerning the Cub Scout Summer Day Camp takes place at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday in building 2011 on the Bitburg Annex. For more information, call Gary Hackl at 06553-1745.

Diabetes support group

The diabetes support group and the Partners in Care Program hold a "Preventing Complications through Improved Management" seminar at 6 p.m. Wednesday in the Bitburg Annex hospital conference room. For more information, call Capt. Lora Balerno at 452-8127.

Singles appreciation dinner

The Key Spouses Group cooks the next singles military appreciation dinner in the Spangdahlem Air Base Chapel Thursday. The menu consists of barbecue ribs, schwenk, hamburgers, hot dogs and more. For more information, call Master Sgt. John Johnston at 452-6143.


Family support center news

The following classes take place in building 307 on Spangdahlem Air Base. Call 452-6422 for details or to register.

■Deployment briefings 8-9 a.m. Tuesday and Wednesday.

■Key Spouses meeting noon to 1:30 p.m. April 27.

The following class takes place in building 2001 on the Bitburg Annex. Call



Senior Airman Esperanza Berrios

Just peachie
Spangdahlem Middle School students perform the play, "James and the Giant Peach," April 5. The school's drama club performed three shows during the first week of April in the gymnasium.

452-9491 for details or to register.

■Home buying seminar 6-8 p.m. Tuesday.

■Deployment briefings 8-9 a.m. Wednesday.

■Financial planning 6-8 p.m. Thursday.

Colonial Days

Bitburg Middle School holds its Colonial Days 8:15 a.m. to 2:55 p.m. April 27 in room 111. Fifth-grade students dress in colonial costumes and do colonial activities, such as making candles, butter and writing with quill pens. For more information, call 452-9110 or 452-9332.

Volunteer recognition

The 52nd Fighter Wing Volunteer Recognition Ceremony takes place at 11 a.m. April 27 in the Saber Club. For reservations, call Jackie Abell at 452-9491 by Tuesday.

Volksmarching

The Eifel Wanderers Volksmarching Club discusses upcoming trips to the Czech Republic and Austria during its 7 p.m. meeting May 2 in the Metterich Zum Stein Gasthaus. For more information, call Theresa Stevens at 452-6597.

Learning new skills

The 52nd Services Squadron skills development center offers the following classes in April in Bitburg Annex building 2002. Call 452-9316 for details or to register.

■Basket weaving 5-9 p.m. May 24. Cost is \$25, plus \$15 for supplies.

■Tote painting 6-8 p.m. Wednesday. Cost is \$15.

The following classes take place in Spangdahlem Air Base building 189. Call 452-6841 for details or to register.

■Tote painting 6-8 p.m. Monday. Cost is \$15.

■Auto mechanics 5-7 p.m. May 9 and 16. Cost is \$20.

■Basket weaving 5-9 May 8 and 10. Cost is \$25, plus \$15 for supplies.

SMS carpet auction

The Spangdahlem Middle School holds a carpet auction 1-5 p.m. May 5 to raise money for the eighth-grade class trip. Handmade Turkish rugs are being auctioned. For more information, call the school at 452-7205.

Pre-school opportunities

■The Bunny Club meets at 10 a.m. each Thursday in Bitburg Annex building 2001. Call Michelle Linnen at 452-3130 for details.

■Ready, Set, Grow meets at 11 a.m. each Wednesday in Bitburg Annex building 2001. Call Cindy Gabehart at 452-3130 for details.

■Ready, Set, Grow Spangdahlem meets at 11 a.m. each Monday in the Speicher Protestant church. Call Terri Hostetter at 452-8279 for details.

■The Spangdahlem playgroup meets at 9:30 a.m. each Wednesday in Spangdahlem Air Base military family housing unit 422C. Call Dr. Suzanne Furman at 452-8279 for details.

Fine-tuning fatherhood

A new program targeting fathers begins 3-4:30 p.m. May 3 in the Bitburg Annex building 67. The fine-tuning fatherhood program continues each Thursday until May 24. To register or for more information, call 452-3130.

Panther Paws update

The Panther Officers Spouses are updating their Panther Paws 2000 book. People are asked to send inputs or changes to 52nd SVS/SVA, Unit 3670 Box 170, APO AE 09126 as soon as possible.

Community calendar

The spring edition of the Eifel Community Connection Community

Calendar for April, May and June is available in the family support center and health and wellness center. The calendar is a complete, single-source guide to on-base activities. For more information, call Staff Sgt. Ted Kummet at 452-9355.

Postal vending machine

The Bitburg Annex Post Office has a 24-hour vending machine for stamp sales. Current products are first-class stamp books for \$6.80; post card stamp books for \$2 and stamped envelopes in bundles of five for \$2.10. More products are scheduled to be added once available from the United States Postal Service.

For more information, call the post office at 452-9406.

Chapel library

The Spangdahlem Air Base Chapel Library opens 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday and Friday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday, and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday in building 128. Call the chapel at 452-6711 for more information.

Women's group

Circle of Friends, a new women's group focusing on self-sufficiency, skills development and opportunities, meets noon to 1 p.m. each Wednesday in the Spangdahlem Air Base housing unit 422-C social room. Call Jennifer Hirshfield at 06562-932982 or Connie Ketchum at 452-8279 for details.

Girl Scouts

Local Girl Scout chapters seek volunteers for lone troop committee chair, treasurer, registrar and events committee chair positions. Call Lisa Denoncour at 06565-944587 for details.

Parent support

"Mentoring Moms and Parenting Partners" is a support program teaming experienced parents with new parents who would like someone to go to for advice. Call Dr. Suzanne Furman at 452-8279 or Becky Johnson at 452-6881 for more information.

Reading volunteers

The Bitburg Middle School School-Home-Community Partnership Committee seeks volunteers to help reading circles and book groups through June 12. Call Jesus Posadas at 452-9332 or e-mail Jesus.Posadas@eu.odododea.edu for details.

Cub Scouts

The Cub Scouts local chapter seeks volunteers to help with summer day camp July 9-14. Specifically, the Scouts need nature, sports and outdoor directors and den leaders. The camp is designed to encourage and teach boys to use leadership skills. Call Gary Hackl at 06553-1745 or John Kennedy at 06561-948843 for details or to sign up.

More than just Team Eifel - a program

By Maj. Scott A. Kiser
52nd Contracting Squadron commander

As I sat down to keystroke out this article, we were in the midst of "March Madness." It's a great time of the year for someone whose hometown is Lexington, Ky., considered by many as "The Basketball Capitol of the World." Sorry about that, those whom grew up in the Hoosier State (Col. John Watkins, 52nd Fighter Wing vice commander).

By the time this article is printed and you're reading it in the Eifel Times, those who follow college basketball will already know who earned this year's title as the NCAA Champions. Hopefully your favorite team enjoyed great success and made it to "The Dance." Now, getting to the topic, what has college basketball got to do with "Team Eifel?" Simple.

Since entering the Air Force, I have been as you probably have, a part of a winning team. Perhaps your squadron or flight won some particular award or competition. Depending on your length of time of service in our Air Force, you may have played a major or supporting role on numerous winning teams, at various bases, maybe in different major commands. Whether you're a flyer, fixer, maintainer or supporter, it's always a great feeling to be part of winning organization. When the team wins, we all win. It inspires us to compete at the next level and to achieve that winning sensation time and time again.

Before entering the U.S. Air Force, I had the great fortune to be a part of the University of Kentucky men's basketball program . . . the winningest basketball program in NCAA history. This program earned the most NCAA tournament appearances (41), most tournament games (121), most tournament wins (85), most number of Division I victories (1,797), highest winning percentage (.764) and is second in number of NCAA championships (seven) to only one other university — right, that one out on the West Coast. Those seven championships were also accomplished under four separate head coaches, (read senior leadership), a very difficult undertaking.

Winning time and time again is precisely why I chose a particular word — program. It was made clear to me by then head coach Joe B. Hall that, "There's a lot of great basketball teams in the NCAA and around the country during any given year, but there's only a few great basketball programs." If you follow college basketball at all, you could probably name the others, UCLA, Indiana, North Carolina and Duke. Programs that produce consistent, perennial winning records by demanding high standards, encouraging education, developing and utilizing perennial depth in their player personnel, by everyone knowing and practicing their roles and executing it on the hardwood or on the tarmac.

I would submit the 52nd Fighter Wing,

likewise, is perhaps just a little more than Team Eifel. It's a program. If you haven't done so already, pull out a copy of the recent Installation Excellence Award package and take a glance — a lot of wins throughout the wing, perennial depth and perennial top rankings.

Examples abound. Operationally, the 52nd FW was the only wing to meet its flying-hour contract last year; the 52nd Civil Engineer Squadron took the Air Force Curtin Award; and the 52nd Services Squadron won the Air Force Inkeeper Award. The 52nd FW was the only wing rated "excellent" during the functional inspection last year. A lot of organizational signs list multiple "Best in USAF" wins, while the 52nd Comptroller and Contracting Squadrons teamed up to win three straight USAF Top Dollar competitions (with different players every year).

Chief Master Sgt. Buddy Romano, 52nd Operations Support Squadron, and Tech. Sgt. Matthew Marshall, 52nd Supply Squadron, won 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year honors two years in a row. Master Sgt. Robert Buchannan and Senior Master Sgt. Michael Berg were named Air Force Outstanding Contracting Senior NCO back-to-back years.

No wing in the Air Force produces repeat wins like that! That's depth and it's a true testimony to the quality of our enlisted folks, and lots more examples permeate this program.

The 52nd CONS enlisted team is without a doubt the best I've ever worked with (seven different bases). You may not see them all the time because they, like many folks here, are TDY a lot. In fact they went TDY to 16 different countries last year alone. They provided contracting services this year, as in many years prior, for many European Command, U.S. State Department, Defense Department and Air Force humanitarian assistance missions to Azerbaijan, Albania, Romania, Bulgaria, Ghana, not to mention Air Expeditionary Force 9 and 2 locations. They're deep in contracting and real-world experience unlike any other contracting squadron in the Air Force.

Due to depth, experience and leadership, the 52nd FW made it back to the IEA "Final Three" after winning it all just a couple of years ago. Although we didn't win this year, any coach realizes how tough it is to make it back to the "Final Four" — only programs make it back time and again to compete among the elite.

As the IEA evaluators came through, I had a chance to talk with the one (a pinned-on colonel at 17 years, obviously no dummy) and the IEA team chief. Both expressed they could "sense" a team presence. Perhaps "what the colonel really meant was" they were experiencing the presence of a program.

Ability more than responsibility produces recognition for troops

By Tech. Sgt. Rich Romero
52nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office

Award packages are a mainstay of Air Force recognition programs, and a responsibility of NCOs and officers not to be taken lightly.

Unfortunately at times, the ability — not the responsibility of those NCOs and officers — to write competitive packages has the potential to make or break the chances for a troop to "win" or "lose."

While they do the work; go the extra mile; improve themselves; support unit, base and community activities — fill the squares as we sometimes call it — they don't write the packages. Good or bad, that's the way it works. Boards help, maybe, but with TDYs, deployments, contingencies, you name it, it's tougher and tougher to do so.

I recently had the distinct privilege of "grading" quarterly award packages. Not that I'm an expert with award packages, but I did write an Air Force award-winning package for a program I managed in 2000.

While I don't think anyone would argue, "being

considered by your supervisor for an award is recognition itself," is true, if we don't write competitive packages, what signal are we really sending? No, our troops hopefully never see the packages we write (good or bad), but there are those of us who do see them. Some make us wish we could write like that. Others cause us to step back and shake our heads.

Yes, it's subjective. There's no black and white, only shades of gray. Still, it doesn't take rocket scientists to distinguish good and bad packages. They "speak" for themselves.

As I explained earlier, I'm not an expert; therefore, I don't profess to have all the answers to writing the best package. I can offer a few suggestions, though.

■ "Where's the beef?" Many quick weight loss diets lack substance, but at what expense? Without substance, a body (or an award package) eventually collapses.

■ White space. While in newspaper and magazine design, white space can be used effectively; I've yet seen it apply to award packages. With award packages, you might as well write, "I couldn't come up with anything else to write. Sorry."

■ Blowing smoke. Most people who evaluate award packages don't have a clue about the troop's job. Still, don't think we fell off a turnip truck, either. As an Air Force, we're the "best trained, best educated, best . . ." trust me, if it smells like rotten fish, it's probably rotten fish and we can tell.

It takes a lot of time and effort on the part of writers to articulate their troop's contributions, but it's an investment in our future and worth doing well.

If you don't feel as though you can write, or did write, a package worthy of your troop, ask for help. Have your supervisor, an NCO or respect or commander review it. Again, it's every NCOs' and officers' responsibility to reward their troops. Asking for help to accomplish that is part of it.

I just hope when you pat your troop on the back and say, "good job, maybe next time," that you did your job — maybe next time.

Eifel Times

www.spangdahlem.af.mil

Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany

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You have a choice. Call Airmen
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As of Thursday

Greener grass

For supervisors only, fixes to our retention problem

By Chief Master Sgt. Joe Lavigne
15th Air Base Wing Career Assistance Adviser

What can we do to make the Air Force a more attractive career option? I figure if I had this question, some others did too. So, I decided to get some answers.

A couple months ago the results of the latest "exit" survey were released. People who are walking out the door complete this survey and their input is pretty candid. The number one reason enlisted folks are leaving? Availability of civilian jobs.

OK, I can buy that. After all, the economy's been strong for a decade. There are tons of jobs out there, with the unemployment rate the lowest it's been in years. There's even talk about raising the minimum wage. But what about all the "great" jobs people talk about when they're leaving the Air Force. I took a look at Fortune Magazine's "Top 100 companies to work for" to find out what the draw is.

First, I looked at a company called Qualcomm. I'm not a techie, but I think they're one of those high-tech firms that has run a great business the last couple years. Their growth rate for 1999? Of 90,000 applicants, they had minus 451 positions open up. Not a typo. Negative growth. Starting pay for a senior material coordinator is \$28,000 a year.

Maybe that was a fluke. Next I looked at USAA. They had 44,700 applicants that resulted in minus 163 jobs. Math isn't my strong point, but I think the odds of getting rich might be better in Vegas. The pay is pretty good though. For a customer account professional the starting salary is just \$8,000 less per year than a senior airman with four years service makes.

One more . . . Southwest Airlines is one of the top five companies to work for. 144,500 applicants, 1,314 new jobs .



If your folks are thinking about leaving the Air Force, I hope you'll point out that the grass isn't always greener on the other side of the fence . . . in a lot of cases, it's still just grass. But more importantly, by taking steps to correct those things we control - like recognition of one's efforts, leadership at the unit level and job satisfaction - you won't put yourself in the position of having to explain the color of grass.

Chief Master Sgt. Joe Lavigne

. . . Their most common entry-level job pays \$17,000 per year. But if you land a job with them as a programmer/analyst, you can expect to make the same amount a staff sergeant with eight years' service makes.

Maybe the availability of jobs really isn't the answer. Next on the list of reasons enlisted members leave is pay and allowances. Fair enough.

Back to the list of the best companies to work for. We

already talked about the pay. American Express prides itself in that 90 percent of their employees give the company high marks for treating women and minorities fairly. Maybe we should lower our standard to 90 percent.

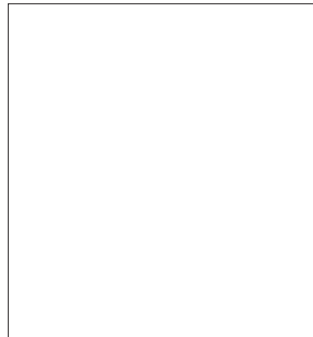
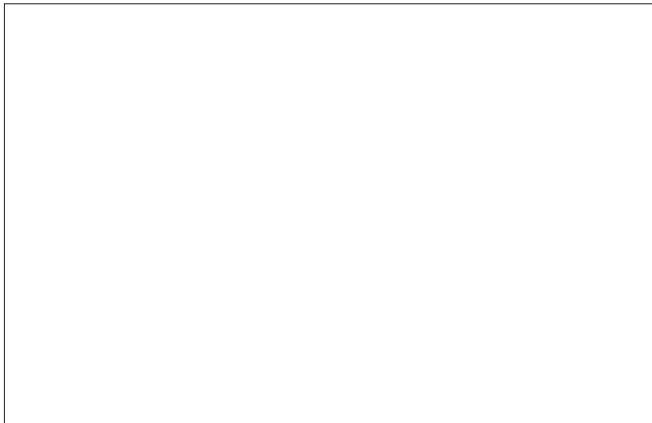
What about the high-tech world? SAS Institute, a major software developer, has a state-of-the-art fitness center, a clinic and subsidized child-care. I guess they took a tour of an Air Force base when they were laying out their facilities.

Here's another example: FedEx offers 48 hours of professional training a year. Last time I checked, the Air Force probably offered at least that much.

Still no answer I'm satisfied with. So, I looked at the next three reasons that force people out the door. I just got a new set of glasses so I had to look again - no mistake. The reasons are recognition of one's efforts, leadership at the unit level and job satisfaction. Things that don't cost a penny, but end up costing us years of experience when people walk out the door.

Unbelievable but true. Those three reasons cause discontent with our employees. I took a look at some startling data from several human resources firms in the civilian sector and found out we're not alone. Lack of recognition and poor job satisfaction are the leading causes for employees to "job hop" on the other side of the fence.

What's the moral of the story? If your folks are thinking about leaving the Air Force, I hope you'll point out that the grass isn't always greener on the other side of the fence . . . in a lot of cases, it's still just grass. But more importantly, by taking steps to correct those things we control - like recognition of one's efforts, leadership at the unit level and job satisfaction - you won't put yourself in the position of having to explain the color of grass. (Air Force Print News courtesy Pacific Air Forces News Service)



Courtesy photo

Toys, such as the dolls and trains pictured, are on display at the Spielzeug museum in Trier.

Step back in time to childhood in Trier museum displaying toys

By Iris Reiff
52nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office

Toys have always been the world in miniature.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, there were simple wooden and moving toys. At the turn of the century, after the technical revolution, cars came into the nursery and in the 50s there were tremendous innovations that are reflected in the toys of today.

Dolls, too, have changed according to the fashion of the day.

A visit to Trier's most popular Spielzeug, or toy museum, is a step back into the history of toys. More than 5,000 items can be found on three floors, featuring an impressive doll collection, stuffed animals, mechanical toys, cars, airplanes, playing and dancing figures, and the steam locomotive, as well as toys related to aerospace and space travel.

The world of the miniature railway is displayed on the second floor, while most dolls, doll shops, doll houses and doll carriages

can be found on the third floor.

The museum also has an additional exhibition area in the entrance hall, featuring tin toys, dolls and more. A television is set up for people to view the museum's exhibition on video.

The Trier toy museum can be found on Nagelstrasse 4-5. The museum is open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily October, and noon to 4 p.m. daily November to March. This museum, just like it is the case with most museums in Germany, is closed Monday.

Entry is 7.50 DM for adults, 4 DM for children under age 18, 3 DM for children, ages 4-10, and 2 DM for children under 3. Group rates are also available.

For more information, call the museum at 0651-75850 or its Web site at www.spielzeugmuseum-trier.de.

Beware that the Trier Spielzeugmuseum will move to the Trier walkplatz (main market square) this year; however, an exact date for the relocation has not been determined yet.

Out and about

■Rock music by Subway to Sally plays tonight in the Berufsbildende Schulen school auditorium. For details, call 0651-145990.

■See the Schwab Ensemble performing ballads at 8 p.m. Saturday in the Bitburg Beda House cultural center. Tickets are 35 DM and are available by calling 06561-6001-144 or 145.

■See "Evita," a musical by Andrew Lloyd Webber, Saturday in Trier. For details, call 0651-145990.

■Visit a flea market Sunday in front of the Kenn-Trier Wal-Mart; in front of the Wittlich Moebel King furniture store; along the Kinheim Mosel shore; in front of the Idar-Oberstein Globus Handelshof; and at the Daun Forum hall.

■The Cochem Castle just opened for the 2001 summer season. The castle, which is located within 15 minutes walking distance of the town of Cochem is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. Entry is 7 DM for adults and 6 DM for children. Groups of 12 and more people pay 6 DM each. More details and information about the history of the castle will be printed an upcoming issue of the Eifel Times.

■Bitburg sponsors its monthly town market through 4 p.m. today in front of the Bitburg Beda house. People can find

anything ranging from Dutch cheese to fresh fruits and vegetables, plants, household goods, clothes and more.

■May 1 is a federal German holiday and Labor Day in Germany. The entire country celebrates the day with outings and a variety of traditions. Witches night is celebrated the night prior. Read about May Day traditions in Germany in the next issue of the Eifel Times.

■Wittlich sponsors a May festival April 30 through May 1 with an entertainment program in the center of town.

■Purchase tickets now to the historical open-air-plays of Trier's Antiquity Festival, June 27 through July 22.

■Sign up now and explore Verdun, France, with members of the German-American Friendship Club May 19. Call Gisela Traut at 452-6172 or Marlies Wallen at 452-6063 for details and to reserve a seat.

■The German-American Friendship club meets for its monthly social -- a dinner -- at 7 p.m. May 10 in the Speicher "Unter den Kastanien" restaurant. Just show up and enjoy.

■Learn how World War II affected the Eifel region at an exhibition through April 22 in the Speicher Heimat

museum. The event is open 2-4 p.m. Sunday and 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Wednesday. Call 06562-20023 for details or to register for a group visit. The museum is located across the street from the Speicher town hall on Jacobstrasse.

■Entertainment for the entire family can be found just outside the gate at the Gondorf Eifel Park, which recently reopened for the 2001 season. Detailed information about the park, the different types of animals and entertainment will be printed in an upcoming issue of the Eifel Times.

■Art lovers can admire an art show with paintings by numerous artists from throughout the country in the Trier Simeonstift city museum, located near the Porta Nigra. Subjects relate to the 1930s. Visit the museum's Web site at www.museum-trier.de for details. The show is open daily 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

■Pop Meets Classic is the title for a concert at 8 p.m. April 28 in the Schweich Stefan-Andres hall. The ticket price ranges from 26 to 46 DM. Call 0651-61071 for tickets and details.

■Reserve tickets for the German Bundeswehr military corps concert April 28 in the Hettenrodt Zirkuszelt. For details, call 0651-145990.

■A rock concert featuring Hexenrock in Hettenrodt with Fury in the Slaughterhouse, Kon Chauvi, Snail's House and Life takes place at 7 p.m. April 30 at the Hettenrodt Zirkuszelt. For details, call 06781-3421 or 06781-33247. Tickets can also be obtained by calling 0651-145990.

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Information, Tickets and Tours offers the following tours in April. Call the Spangdahlem Air Base Community Activities Center at 452-6567 or the Bitburg Annex community center at 452-9120 for details.

■Paris overnight Saturday and Sunday. Cost is \$185 for adults, \$130 for children 3-12.

■Keukenhof and Madurodam, Holland, Saturday. Cost is \$75 for adults, \$65 for children ages 4-12.

■Cochem medieval dinner Saturday. Cost is \$65 per person.

■Disneyland Paris Saturday. Cost is \$75 for adults, \$65 for children ages 4-12.

■Paris express Saturday. Cost is \$89 for adults, \$75 for children ages 3-17.

■Keukenhof and Madurodam, Holland, Saturday. Cost is \$75 for adults, \$65 for children ages 4-12.

Movies

All movies play at 7 p.m. unless otherwise indicated.

Bitburg Castle

Tonight

15 Minutes (R)

A homicide detective and a fire marshal team up to find out what fame is and what people are willing to broadcast on national television for it. Starring Robert De Niro, Edward Burns. (Violence, language and sexuality.)

Saturday

15 Minutes

Sunday

Emperor's New Groove (G)

Emperor Kuzco is transformed into a llama by his power-hungry advisor, the devious diva Yzma. Stranded in the jungle, Kuzco's only chance to reclaim the high life rests with peasant Pacha.

Closed Monday and Tuesday

Wednesday

Sugar and Spice (PG-13)

The A-Squad is your typical group of mall-going, pizza-eating, boy-chasing teenagers living on the edge of perfection. Sure, each member has her foibles. But when they work together, making human pyramids and rousing the home team, they rule. Starring Marley Shelton and James Marsden. (Language, sexual humor and thematic elements.)

Thursday

Snatch (R)

A diamond thief arrives in London to deliver a huge diamond to his boss. In his mission to offload smaller stones, he's tempted into placing a bet on an illegal boxing match. Little does he know, the match is a set-up. Starring Benicio Del Toro and Dennis Farina. (Violence, language and nudity.)

Spangdahlem Skyline

Tonight

Exit Wounds (R)

Orin is a tough cop in an inner-city precinct who discovers a web of dirty cops and corruption. Starring Steven Seagal and Isaiah Washington. (Violence and language.)

Saturday

Exit Wounds

Sunday

Head Over Heels (PG-13)

Monday

Valentine (R)

Four friends receive morbid valentine day cards. A person they all spurned years ago is stalking them and Valentines Day 2001 is the day of revenge. Starring David Boreanaz and Marelly Shelton.

Tuesday

Anti-trust (PG-13)

When a young computer whiz is wooed by a huge Silicon Valley company, he discovers his boss has nefarious ways around anti-trust complaints. Starring Ryan Phillippe and Tim Robbins.

Closed Wednesday and Thursday

Times and movies are subject to change.
For the most current information,
call 452-9441.